

Dreamers through legislative action and to wield our power of the purse to ensure that the Department of Homeland Security does not make immigrant families and communities casualties of a reckless, indiscriminate detention and deportation machine.

Sincerely,

Luis V. Gutiérrez; Adriano Espaillat; Raúl M. Grijalva; Jerrold Nadler; Zoe Lofgren; Michelle Lujan Grisham; Judy Chu; Joe Crowley; Jan Schakowsky; José E. Serrano; Steve Cohen; Eliot L. Engel; Ted Deutch; Dina Titus; Nydia M. Velázquez; Lloyd Doggett; Carolyn B. Maloney; Linda T. Sánchez; Gene Green; Paul D. Tonko; Alcee L. Hastings.

Al Green; Albio Sires; Peter Welch; Barbara Lee; Adam Smith; Keith Ellison; Gwen Moore; Henry C. "Hank" Johnson, Jr.; Ben Ray Lujan; Maxine Waters; Bobby L. Rush; Elijah Cummings; Danny K. Davis; Eleanor Holmes Norton; Yvette D. Clarke; Robert A. Brady; Hakeem S. Jeffries; Grace F. Napolitano; Jared Polis; Norma J. Torres; Juan Vargas; Bonnie Watson Coleman.

Donald Norcross; Tony Cardenas; Kathleen M. Rice; Mark Pocan; Mark Takano; Darren Soto; Michael E. Capuano; Ed Perlmutter; Nanette Diaz Barragan; Grace Meng; Robin L. Kelly; Jimmy Gomez; Bill Foster; Joaquin Castro; Ruben Gallego; Brenda L. Lawrence; Robert C. "Bobby" Scott; Brendan F. Boyle; Donald S. Beyer, Jr.; Earl Blumenauer; Dwight Evans.

J. Luis Correa; Pramila Jayapal; Ro Khanna; Suzanne Bonamici; James P. McGovern; Joseph P. Kennedy, III; Jamie Raskin; Colleen Hanabusa; Jacky Rosen; John Lewis; Mark DeSaulnier; Val Butler Demings; Frank Pallone, Jr.; Ted W. Lieu; Alma S. Adams, Ph.D.; Salud O. Carbajal; Donald M. Payne, Jr.; John Yarmuth; Alan Lowenthal.

CELEBRATING PUBLIC SCHOOLS WEEK

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. THOMPSON) for 5 minutes.

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, this week our Nation celebrates Public Schools Week. It is a time when we acknowledge the diversity and success of our public schools and the sound education that they provide.

Strengthening America's public schools is the best way to ensure our children's future success and our country's prosperity. Ninety percent of American children attend public schools.

This week, supporters across the country will share stories of the many students, schools, and professionals who make public schools such a vital component of our communities. This includes parents who are working hard to improve educational outcomes for children. Advocates nationwide will share scores of stories about public school students and their successes.

Mr. Speaker, public school teachers truly make a difference in the lives of our students. They prepare them for a bright and successful future. It is their dedication to our students that builds strong public schools and, therefore, strong communities.

As a senior member of the Education and the Workforce Committee and a

product of public schools, I know the incredible role our schools play in communities across the Nation. Public schools today have much good news to share, from increasing graduation rates and reduced dropout rates to improved ratings given by communities on school performance.

In fact, public school graduation rates have risen from 79 percent in 2010–2011 to 83 percent in 2014–2015. This increase of the measured 5 years reflects that four out of five public school students receive a regular high school diploma within 4 years of starting ninth grade.

While the graduation rates varies among States, 34 States have reported graduation rates between 80 and 89 percent, with the highest being 91 percent in Iowa, followed by 90 percent in New Jersey. Based on data from the current population survey, the dropout rate has steadily decreased, from 10.9 percent in 2000 to 7.4 percent in 2010 and 5.9 percent in 2015.

Last year, 69 percent of recent high school graduates enrolled in a 2-year or 4-year college.

We are making progress, but we can do more.

In many communities, the school district is the largest employer. Teachers, busdrivers, administrators, cafeteria workers, coaches, and facilities management all depend on the school district, and all of these jobs contribute to the fabric of a community. Communities are stronger and schools are better when we all work together to support public education.

Public schools also make sure our kids receive at least one nutritious meal a day. More than 30 million school lunches are served each day, including 20 million free and 2 million reduced price lunches. For some students, it may be the only meal they receive will be the one at school.

Mr. Speaker, a child's opportunity for success should not be left to chance. Every child needs a quality, well-equipped school right in their neighborhood where they can learn, be inspired, and thrive.

Public education has always been the great equalizer in the United States, and I am grateful for the contributions of our public schools. I know that, together, we will continue to work to strengthen them for our most precious resource: our children.

Happy Public Schools Week.

GUN VIOLENCE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from California (Ms. PELOSI).

Ms. PELOSI. Mr. Speaker, today, thousands of students across the Nation are walking out of their schools to demand real action to end the tragedy of gun violence. Young men and women across the country—children, really—from coast to coast and in the heartland of America are standing up and speaking out for change. Members of

Congress will meet some of them on the west front lawn to join them in saying this: Enough is enough.

Mr. Speaker, I thank our distinguished colleague from Florida (Mr. DEUTCH) for his extraordinary leadership, whether it is with the students, with legislation on the floor, or in the community at large to help make the difference.

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Here we are, community after community, reeling from the horror of gun violence, perpetrated against our children, our families.

Our hearts ache for those in Orlando, San Bernardino, Mother Emanuel Church, Las Vegas, Sutherland Springs, Parkland, Newtown. The list is a very long one, and it is, in addition, on the streets and in the homes across our country.

There has been too much violence and too much pain. This should not be a political issue. The American people overwhelmingly want action. A full 97 percent of Americans support requiring background checks for all gun buys, including 97 percent of gun owners. There is a commonsense, bipartisan path forward in the Congress. We can take action today on comprehensive background checks without the dangerous Concealed Carry Reciprocity bill, allowing the CDC to study gun violence, and gun violence restraining orders that empower law enforcement to intervene when someone is a threat to themselves or others.

We should all be listening to the American people on both sides of the aisle, and we should allow the House to vote on bipartisan gun violence solutions. The families and students suffering from the heartbreak of gun violence deserve real leadership in this body, not a Republican White House and Congress that are saying one thing and doing another. It is deeply disappointing that, just days after embracing the need for commonsense, bipartisan gun violence prevention, still we have nothing coming forward.

House Democrats have filed discharge petitions to force votes on the Thompson-King bipartisan background check bill with 200 cosponsors. Two hundred cosponsors for a background check bill. That is a start. That is remarkable. And also the Background Check Completion Act. Democrats will continue to press for bipartisan progress to reduce the epidemic of gun violence in our Nation.

Let me say, as we go out in a little bit to join the students who are doing their walkout across the country, an enormous thank-you to them. An enormous thank-you to them. While we have sympathy for everyone who has loss of life because of gun violence across the country—they are always in our prayers, in our thoughts, and in our determination to make a difference—the eloquence, the courage, the determination of these young people in Florida to come forward in such